

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-07

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY SANA IMMEDIATE
INFO USLO RIYADH IMMEDIATE

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, MASS, SA, YE, US

SUBJECT: U.S.-SAUDI COOPERATION IN SUPPORT OF NORTH YEMEN

REFS: (A) SANA 3215, (B) SANA 3216, (C) SANA 3217,
(D) JIDDA 4704

1. RECENT ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT GHASHMI AND COUP IN
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ADEN AND RESULTANT POTENTIAL FOR INCREASED INSTABILITY
IN REGION SUGGEST A REEXAMINATION OF OUR OVERALL
POLICIES AND PROGRAMS IN SOUTH ARABIA. OF MOST IMMEDIATE
CONCERN IS THE DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY OF NORTH YEMEN AND THE
NEED TO DEMONSTRATE TANGIBLY OUR SUPPORT FOR THE INTEGRITY
OF THAT STATE. FOLLOWING IS BASED ON TWINAM'S CON-
SULTATIONS WITH EMBASSIES JIDDA AND SANA AND THE COMPRE-

HENSIVE SUGGESTIONS OF EMBASSY SANA IN REFS A-C.

2. FOR AMBASSADOR WEST: REQUEST YOU SEEK EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH MFA PRINCE SAUD, MODA PRINCE SULTAN, AND OTHER SAG OFFICIALS YOU DEEM APPROPRIATE, TO CONVEY FOLLOWING POINTS, STATING YOU ARE SPEAKING UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM WASHINGTON.

(A) WE SHARE SAUDI CONCERN ABOUT RECENT EVENTS IN SOUTH ARABIA--BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH YEMEN--AND WOULD APPRECIATE

HEARING THE GOVERNMENT OF SAUDI ARABIA'S LATEST ASSESSMENT OF YEMENI SITUATION AND ITS VIEW OF IMMEDIATE AND LONGER-TERM IMPLICATIONS FOR THE REGION.

(B) WE ARE IMPRESSED BY SAUDI LEADERSHIP IN RALLYING SUPPORT FOR YAR IN LEAGUE'S CONDEMNING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN FOR ITS ROLE IN THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT GHASHMI AND RECOMMENDING A GENERAL "FREEZE" IN RELATIONS AGAINST THE REGIME BY MEMBER STATES.

(C) IT IS OUR INITIAL IMPRESSION THAT THE LEAGUE'S DECISION TO ISOLATE THE PDRY COUPLED WITH THE INTERNAL DIVISIONS STILL PRESENT AFTER AND EXACERBATED BY THE JUNE 26 COUP HAVE WEAKENED THE ADENI REGIME'S ABILITY TO THREATEN ITS
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NEIGHBORS EITHER MILITARILY OR POLITICALLY. USG FEELS ISOLATION OF THE PDRY WILL BE MORE EFFECTIVE IN LIMITING DANGER TO THE REGION THAN PRECIPITIOUS MILITARY INTERVENTION AGAINST IT. INTERVENTION, ON THE CONTRARY, COULD RESULT IN QUITE THE REVERSE -- A CONSOLIDATION OF PDRY REGIME'S SUPPORT IN SOUTH YEMEN AND PERHAPS EVEN DESPERATE RETALIATORY ACTION AGAINST NORTH YEMEN OR OMAN, THUS BEGINNING A CYCLE DESTABILIZING TO THE ENTIRE REGION. A MORE ACTIVE SOVIET MILITARY ROLE IN SOUTH YEMEN COULD RESULT.

(D) WE ARE PREPARED TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE SAG TO INSURE THAT AN ADEQUATE DEFENSIVE POSTURE AGAINST SOUTH YEMEN IS DEVELOPED AND MAINTAINED. FYI: YOU SHOULD NOT RPT NOT VOLUNTEER FOLLOWING BUT IF SAG RAISES QUESTION YOU MAY REPLY AS FOLLOWS: IF THE THREAT TO NORTH YEMEN SHOULD BECOME SO IMMEDIATE THAT THE YARG AND THE SAG CONCLUDE THAT THE STATIONING OF SAUDI TROOPS IN NORTH YEMEN IS CALLED FOR TO PROVIDE AN ADEQUATE DEFENSE, WE WOULD WANT TO CONSULT CLOSELY WITH SAG. IN THIS CONNECTION ANY USE OF US-ORIGIN EQUIPMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE REGIONAL DEFENSE PROVISIONS OF THE MILITARY

ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT OF 1951, WHICH WOULD NOT EMBRACE ACTION OTHER THAN LEGITIMATE SELF-DEFENSE.

(E) AN IMMEDIATE QUESTION IS THE NEED TO DEMONSTRATE TO NORTH YEMEN THE COMMITMENT OF THE US AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, SAUDI ARABIA TO ITS SECURITY. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO INVIGORATE OUR JOINT MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WITH NORTH YEMEN IN ORDER TO MAKE A CREDIBLE IMPACT ON THE PERCEPTIONS IN BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH YEMEN OF THE YARG'S ABILITY TO PROVIDE FOR LEGITIMATE DEFENSE. WE WANT TO CONSULT CLOSELY

WITH APPROPRIATE SAG OFFICIALS ABOUT STEPS WHICH SHOULD BE TAKEN TO MAKE PROGRAM MORE EFFECTIVE. IN ADDITION, WE
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ARE URGENTLY EXAMINING THE FEASIBILITY OF ACCELERATED DELIVERY DATES FOR PREVIOUSLY APPROVED EQUIPMENT AND THE AVAILABILITY OF U.S. TRAINING TEAMS TO ACCOMPANY THE EQUIPMENT AND ASSIST IN ITS INTEGRATION INTO THE YEMENI ARMED FORCES.

(F) WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE YEMENI ARMED FORCES ARE DESPERATELY SHORT OF MEN. THE YEMENI GOVERNMENT IS NOT ABLE TO COMPETE WITH SALARIES AVAILABLE WITHIN YEMEN OR TO MIGRANT YEMENI WORKERS IN NEIGHBORING STATES AND IS THUS NOT ABLE TO ATTRACT OR RETAIN THE NUMBER AND QUALITY OF PERSONNEL NEEDED TO DEVELOP A CREDIBLE MILITARY FORCE. UNTIL BUDGET SUPPORT OR MILITARY PAY SUBSIDY IS AVAILABLE, IT IS QUESTIONABLE HOW EFFECTIVE ANY REORGANIZATION OR RE-EQUIPPING EFFORT WILL BE. PERHAPS THOSE STATES MOST DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH THE SECURITY OF YEMEN WILL CONSIDER WAYS TO ASSIST THE YEMENI GOVERNMENT WITH THIS PROBLEM.

3. AMBASSADOR WEST MAY WISH TO CONSIDER SUGGESTING TO PRINCE SULTAN THE CREATION OF A WORKING LEVEL COORDINATING GROUP CONSISTING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF MODA AND USMTM, AS WELL AS U.S. DEFENSE ATTACHE AND SAUDI MILITARY MISSION CHIEF IN SANA. THIS GROUP COULD ADDRESS THE ACCELERATION OF THE REORGANIZATION OF THE YEMENI ARMED FORCES, IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM TRAINING REQUIREMENTS AND THE TURNOVER OF U.S. EQUIPMENT ALREADY DELIVERED TO YEMEN. BASED UPON THE DIFFICULTIES WE HAVE EXPERIENCED IN MOVING FORWARD WITH SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO NORTH YEMEN, STATE AND DEFENSE STRONGLY FAVOR CREATION OF SUCH A GROUP AS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM.

4. IF AT SOME POINT THE SAUDIS SHOULD RAISE WITH YOU
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POSSIBILITY OF USING U.S.-ORIGIN EQUIPMENT IN LEGITIMATE SELF-DEFENSE, EITHER IN NORTH YEMEN OR SAUDI ARABIA IT-SELF, YOU SHOULD REMIND SAG THAT U.S. LAW PROHIBITS THE PARTICIPATION OF ANY USG PERSONNEL, MILITARY OR CIVILIAN, INCLUDING FMS CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL IN A COMBAT SUPPORT ROLE. AMBASSADOR SHOULD INSURE HIMSELF OF U.S. CONTRACTOR COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING OF THIS FACT.

5. FOR RANSOM: THE ABOVE IS PROVIDED TO YOU ON AN FYI BASIS. WHILE YOU SHOULD NOT SHARE ANY DETAILS OF JIDDA'S INSTRUCTIONS WITH YARG, YOU SHOULD REASSURE THEM THAT WE ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED WITH THE SAG ON HOW BEST TO ASSIST THEM IN THEIR DEFENSIVE NEEDS.

6. FYI ONLY: UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM, WHO WILL BE VISITING SAUDI ARABIA JULY 17-19 WILL BE INTERESTED IN SAG VIEWS ON SOUTH ARABIA. AS OUR REVIEW IN WASHINGTON OF VARIOUS OPTIONS PROGRESSES WE MAY HAVE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR NEWSOM TO PRESENT TO THE SAUDIS IN THE COURSE OF HIS VISIT. END FYI. VANCE

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